

THE MARYLAND WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION
MINUTES – MARCH 19, 2003

Chairman Tim Lambert called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m. with a quorum.

Approval for Minutes from October 2002 Meeting and November Meeting

- October 2002 meeting minutes and November 2002 meeting minutes were approved without changes.

Conservationist of the Year, Farmer and Employee of the Year Nominations

- Presentation by Robert Beyer, Associate Director of the Game Program
- There are five nominees for the Employee of the Year.
- Mr. Carl DeMatteo, Maryland Farm Bureau, will attend the meeting in the first week in April, and the information will be solicited to the Farm Bureau. Mr. Beyer will have a list of the candidates by the 2nd week in April.
- Wildlife and Heritage Service (WHS) has at least one nominee for the Conservationist of the Year.
- The deadline for submitting nominations was extended. Chairman Lambert and Commissioner Dollar will provide more nominees to Mr. Beyer.

Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee Report/ Mute Swan Plan

- Presentation by Bill Harvey, Game Bird Section Leader
- The Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee is the new version of the former Waterfowl Advisory Committee. Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee Members and the Draft Working Agenda [Attachment A]
 - 1) The Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee is the other body that advises the Secretary. This group is charged with providing the Department with recommendations on migratory game birds.
 - 2) The Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee had several new appointees to the committee.
 - (a) Mr. Ladd Johnson has returned to the Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee. Mr. Johnson was nominated and elected chair of this committee.
 - (b) Mr. Chip Heap was nominated as vice chair of the Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee.
 - 3) The committee agreed to meet three times a year.
 - 4) Some new topics that the Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee will be dealing with are conflicts that surface between dove baiting, regulations and enforcements, and rearing captive mallards.
 - 5) The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will be participating in the nationwide dove banding study that started this year and continues for three more years. The Migratory Bird Fund will provide financial support for this study. Mr. Bill Harvey draft a rough spending plan, and the Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee agreed with the spending plan.
 - 6) DNR reviewed the data from the migratory bird hunters who do not hunt waterfowl, and the results were 20%.
 - 7) The webless activities would include managing our dove fields on public lands and opportunities such as the dove-banding project.
- Questions and Answers
 - 1) Commissioner Lamp asked how a person could be selected for the Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee.
 - (a) The Governor shall appoint nine members that have a particular knowledge of waterfowl habitat, waterfowl conservation, waterfowl ecology, waterfowl management, and waterfowl hunting. The new law substitutes the word waterfowl management with migratory game birds.
 - (b) The language in the law is similar to the general provision of the Wildlife Advisory Commission (WAC).
 - 2) Commissioner Lamp asked how many members serve on Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee, and are all the positions filled.
 - (a) Nine members serve on the Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee. All positions on the committee have been filled.
 - (b) The process for Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee is similar of the process to the WAC.
 - (i) A letter to the Secretary of DNR asking him to consider the following individual.
 - (ii) The individual that is being considered should forward a resume and cover letter stating that his or her name is being considered as a candidate on a committee or a commission and that he or she welcomes the opportunity.
 - 3) Commissioner Adams asked was there any discussion about the committee being named Migratory Bird Committee as opposed to calling it the Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee.

- (a) The name Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee is consistent with the Migratory Game Bird Stamp.
 - (b) The Migratory Game Bird Committee will handle migratory game birds.
- 4) Commissioner Adams stressed concerned for the responsibility for all migratory birds not just migratory game birds. Maryland has a large amount of migratory birds, and Maryland has some issues with many of the migratory non-game birds. Also, Commissioner Adams reminded the Commissioners and WHS staff that we discussed broadening wildlife to not just game species.
 - (a) The definition in the law states specifically game species.
 - (b) The Heritage Program is involved with monitoring migratory birds.
- 5) Chairman Lambert related that the Chairman of the Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee feels it is not necessary for them to report to the WAC because they have the authority to report to the Secretary. The process currently is that they report the final version of the waterfowl seasons, and this Commission offers the Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee recommendations or our approval.
 - (a) The Commission does not examine the materials that the Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee reviews; therefore, the Commission should continue the lines of communication with the Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee.
 - (b) Commissioner Dollar is uncomfortable with having everything on waterfowl issues to be removed from the WAC. Commissioner Adams concurred with Commissioner Dollar comment.
 - (c) Commissioner Dollar added that based on the semantics mechanism, there is a Commission and then there are committees. Therefore, the Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee would report to the WAC.
- 6) Commissioner Freeland asked besides the Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee, what other wildlife committees' reports directly to the Secretary.
 - (a) The other committee that is in statue is the Captive Wildlife Advisory Committee.
 - (b) The Black Bear Task Force, Fur Resource Advisory Committee, Wild Turkey Advisory Committee, Shooting Qualification Committee, and Becoming an Outdoor Woman Committee are internal DNR committees.
- 7) Chairman Lambert deferred further discussion until the April 16th meeting. Chairman Lambert will contact Chairman Johnson from the Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee to outline how we can maintain good lines of communication between both groups.

Mute Swan Plan

- Mr. Bill Harvey provided a summary of the Mute Swan Plan [Attachment B].
 - 1) The power point presentation represents the results of the Waterfowl Advisory Committee, WAC, Mute Swan Task Force, and the Department of Natural Resources.
 - 2) The recommendations were finalized in 2001.
- Questions and Answers
 - 1) Commissioner Dollar addressed question on mute swans breeding.
 - (a) Once the mute swans reach four years of age, they breed through their life.
 - 2) Commissioner Lamp asked who would be doing the injections.
 - (a) DNR has a veterinary on staff to administer injections.
 - (b) If any shooting is necessary qualified staff will do it.
 - 3) Commissioner Lamp asked is it the goal to reduce the mute swans population from 4,500 to 500.
 - (a) No, DNR does not have a target population amount.
 - 4) Commissioner Lamp mentioned the overwhelming concern for the damage the mute swan is doing to submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV). John Hopkins University conducted a study on the actual damage that swans did to SAV, and the results of the study were that swans did a minimal damage compared to other elements in the Bay. Commissioner Lamp urged the Department of Natural Resources to move carefully with the use of lethal methods of shooting mute swans.
 - (a) When the Environmental Impact Statement is completed, WHS will find out if they will allow a hunting season frameworks for mute swans.
 - (b) The USFWS provides permits to state agencies to remove mute swans.
 - 5) Chairman Lambert asked Commissioner Lamp if the opposition that was received is it in regards to the killing of swans in general or the hunting season.
 - (a) Commissioner Lamp replied that he does not think the concern is for the hunting season. His constituency would want the most humane way as possible.
 - (b) Commissioner Lamp added that swans traditionally have very positive qualities and have overtones for people. Some people see these birds as something that you do not shoot.
 - (c) Commissioner King emphasized that the birds are attractive, but the public does not know the devastation that mute swans cause. As for the total impact on SAV, this happens to be one of the

- elements that DNR can control. Certainly, there are other elements that have affected the SAV; however, this may not be the body to discuss and to resolve these other issues.
- (d) Chairman Lambert confirmed that DNR is in charged with reviewing or looking at wildlife aspect, and other agencies are looking at other ways of trying to save the Bay. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation has served a large role in this effort.
- 6) Commissioner Freeland asked if there is any federal legislation pending to remove the protected status from mute swans.
- (a) No, Congress could introduce legislation to overturn the judicial opinion.
- (b) The message from the U. S. Department of Interior is that we are going to deal with the outcome of this ruling.
- 7) Commissioner King asked what is being done to educate the public.
- (a) DNR has done two news segments on Maryland Public Television (MPT), which were most effective.
- (b) WHS need to develop a couple of products, such as pamphlets and handouts.
- (c) Commissioner King suggested providing the pamphlets at the local wild birds' centers and stores that sell bird food.
- (d) WHS has started an educational component making people aware of the consequences of feeding wildlife.
- Comments
 - 1) DNR received about 800 comments and Ms. Edith Thompson compiled the comments and responded to each comment.
 - 2) WHS has clarified and updated new information in the plan.
 - 3) The essence of the plan remained the same.
 - 4) WHS planned to move forward, and WHS is currently updating the new administration.
 - 5) DNR received support from the public. To demonstrate, WHS had over 2,000 authorizations from landowners for DNR to do egg addling on their property to manage mute swans.
 - 6) Reassure the public that the Mute Swan Plan is a managing tool, and not a tool to do away with mute swans.
 - 7) The Mute Swan Plan is a comprehensive and dynamic adopted research effort.
 - 8) The presentation outlined the continuous research effort while DNR takes action to minimize impact, and to understand what level of mute swans we can have in the State.
 - 9) The Mute Swan Plan is part of the Chesapeake Bay Agreement, and this plan is the piece that WHS is responsible for managing.
 - 10) Lethal methods are one small management tool of the Mute Swan Plan.
 - Motion
 - 1) Chairman Lambert motioned for DNR to make recommendations to Secretary to accept the Mute Swan Plan.
 - (a) Commissioner Gregory seconded the motion.
 - (b) We have five in favor and one "abstained" Commissioner Lamp.
 - 2) The motion was passed.

Introduction of the new Assistant Secretary

- Director Peditto introduced Mr. Mike Slattery as the new Assistant Secretary for Resource Management.
 - 1) Assistant Secretary Mike Slattery oversees the following unites: Wildlife and Heritage Service, Fisheries Service, Forestry Service, Environmental Review Area, and Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Commission.
 - 2) Assistant Secretary Mike Slattery expressed enthusiasm to be back with DNR, and looked forward to continuing the relationship of working with the Commission and the many other groups.
- Comments
 - 1) Commissioner Adams commented that under the draft working agenda the Commission has the Teaming with Wildlife (TWW) presented by Lowell Adams and Edith Thompson. Ms. Edith Thompson served as co-chair, and was very instrumental with the work involved with the State Coalition with CARA. TWW received federal monies because Congress heard from the broad constituency. Commissioner Adams encouraged DNR to arrange for someone to continue this effort.
 - 2) Assistant Secretary Mike Slattery pointed out to the Commissioners the current budget situation, and the likelihood that the budget for next year will get worse. We do not know which discretionary activities will remain or will not remain; such decisions will be made after the legislative session.
 - 3) Director Peditto informed the Commissioners that Karina Blizzard, Associate Director of Information and Education for WHS has agreed to keep Teaming with Wildlife going. Director Peditto has taken an active role at the international level.

Urban Wildlife Subcommittee Proposal

- Presentation by Commissioner Joseph Lamp and Chairman Tim Lambert
- Proposed establishment of a WAC subcommittee on urban wildlife issues [Attachment C].
 - 1) Develop a subcommittee that would report to DNR, Wildlife Advisory Commission on issues related to urban wildlife.
 - 2) The Urban Wildlife Subcommittee idea came from the Maryland Non-Lethal Task Force Report.
 - 3) The subcommittee would explore and promote methods of eliminating or reducing human and wildlife conflicts.
 - 4) Commissioner Lamp and Chairman Lambert would like to get the WAC support on developing an urban wildlife subcommittee.
 - 5) Chairman Lambert was informed that DNR is in the process of reducing some of their committees.
 - (a) DNR does not have the resources to provide support for all these committees.
 - (b) Adding a committee in the process of reducing committees will be a problem in regards to staffing.
 - (c) Any committee that WAC creates will have a limit amount of DNR staff involved.
 - 6) Director Peditto recalled before the most recent declaration from the new administration.
 - (a) WHS compiled a list of all the committees and task forces that WHS were responsible for.
 - (b) WHS had to explain the purpose of these committees and task forces, and WHS had to calculate the time and the money WHS spent on these committees and task forces.
 - 7) Commissioner Adams made a few points:
 - (a) The Urban Wildlife Subcommittee is a good opportunity for the hunting interest and the non-hunting to come together.
 - (b) This is a way for us to obtain public input on urban wildlife issues before the Commission.
 - (c) We have operational guidelines that give us the authority to form various committees.
 - (d) The Non-Lethal Task Force recommended greater attention to be given to urban wildlife issues.
 - (e) The Commission should use information from the Non-Lethal Task Force Report because the task force was not involved with the cover letter.
 - (f) The subcommittee would meet on its own, and it is up to the Commission to decide when the subcommittee will report its findings to WAC.
 - 8) Director Peditto outlined if this subcommittee becomes a formal subcommittee of the WAC and recognized on the agenda, the Commission should notified the Secretary that this subcommittee has been formed to advise the WAC on urban wildlife issues.
 - (a) The most important outcome of this decision is your recommendation from the WAC, and the approval of the formation of the formal subcommittee.
 - (b) The following information should be submitted to the Secretary, names of committee members, available personnel as needed, and different groups may or may not hear from.
 - 9) Commissioner Lamp added that the subcommittee would be a formal mechanism where the people can discuss, listen, and report back to their communities.
 - 10) Commissioner Dollar and Commissioner Gregory will support this subcommittee if it includes not only non-lethal methods but also lethal methods for urban wildlife management.
 - 11) Chairman Lambert's vision of this subcommittee is to develop ways of managing urban wildlife problems. The use of guns in these areas is a concern, but there are other means of lethal methods that can be use in these areas.
 - (a) Commissioner Adams emphasized before we approve the final operation of this subcommittee, the Commission needs to have more information. The following is needed:
 - (i) The number of members on this subcommittee and whom they represent.
 - (ii) Guidelines on how the chair will be selected.
 - (iii) Operational guidelines need to be established.
- Motion
 - 1) Chairman Lambert asked for the approval to establish the Urban Wildlife Committee and iron-out the operational details, and report back to the Commission for approval and discussion.
 - 2) Commissioner Adams motion to approve the concepts here today, but a vote on final approval and implementation of the committee will not occur until the Commission receives, and discusses further details on the make-up of the subcommittee and its proposed operations.
 - (a) Commissioner Lamp seconded that motion. We have four in favor and one "Nay" Commissioner Freeland.
 - (b) Chairman Lambert needs to draft a letter in behalf of the Commission to the Secretary stating that the Commission has adopted this concept and voted to approve this motion.
 - (c) The motion was passed.

Approval Final Working Agenda

- The Urban Wildlife Subcommittee will be added to the June meeting.
- Motion
 - 1) Chairman Lambert asked for a motion to accept the draft working agenda.
 - 2) Commissioner Freeland motion to accept and Commissioner King seconded that motion.
 - 3) The motion was passed.

State Forest and Park Service Update

- 1) No report

Natural Resources Police Update

- Presentation by Sergeant Ingerson
- Sgt. Ingerson modified the NRP Resources Police Report to the WAC at the request of Colonel Tammy Broll.
 - 1) The report will be from meeting to meeting.
 - 2) Each duty officer in his or her regional area will take the report from briefing reports.
 - 3) The duty officer is required to submit his or her weekly activities to Colonel Broll on every Monday morning.
- Sgt. Ingerson outlined some of the incidents from the February 1, 2003 through March 16, 2003 Report [Attachment D]
- Questions and Answers
 - 1) Chairman Lambert reported that Maryland Sportsmen's Association (MSA) and the Maryland Bowhunters Society wanted to set up a working group with NRP.
 - (a) Poaching is becoming a huge problem and MSA and the Maryland Bowhunters Society would like to discuss the penalties; they feel that the penalties are too low and not enough is being done.
 - (b) Sgt. Ingerson recalled noticing increased penalties by the court system.
 - (c) Sgt. Ingerson will report this back to his superiors and will check to see if a working group can be arranged.

MSA Update

- No report

Maryland Farm Bureau Report

- No report

Old Business

- No old business

New Business

- Director Peditto updated the Commission with personnel things.
 - 1) Ms. Edith Thompson has resigned to work with Congressman Wayne T. Gilchrest's staff.
 - 2) Mr. Pete Jensen has returned to DNR as the new Deputy Secretary.
 - 3) Mr. Eric Schwaab was asked to resign Friday of last week.
- Commissioner Adams expressed concern for this Commission.
 - 1) Traditionally, law sets the terms; normally, a commissioner will finish his or her term, unless a commissioner elects otherwise.
- Crossbow Stakeholders meeting will be held on April 1, 2003.
 - 1) The meeting starts at 9:30 a.m. in the C-1 Conference Room at the Tawes State Office Building.
 - 2) Contact Ms. Kim Crotty at the general telephone number, if planning to be in attendance.
- Chairman Lambert mentioned that last year, the WAC provided a letter regarding weighing in on Sunday hunting.
 - 1) MSA would like to address the Commission asking for the same endorsement, since the Commission is made up of new members.
 - 2) The endorsement will be asking for the law to be changed, giving DNR the authority within the statute to use Sunday hunting as a management tool.
 - 3) Commissioner Freeland commented that the Farm Bureau will remain neutral on the Sunday hunting issue.
 - 4) Commissioner Adams concurred with MSA endorsement.

- Motion
 - 1) Chairman Lambert asked the Commissioners for approval to create a new letter with this Commission support.
 - (a) Commissioner Gregory and Commissioner Dollar agreed as long the new letter remains the same tone.
 - (b) Commissioners agreed to create a new letter to MSA regarding Sunday hunting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Attendance

Members:	L. Adams, C. Dollar, W. Freeland, R. Gregory, M. King, T. Lambert, J. Lamp
Guests:	
Staff:	B. Beyer, K. Blizzard, B. Harvey, L. Ingerson, B. King, H. Lynch, P. Peditto, T. Spencer
Absent:	G. Fratz, C. Garner, K. Jones